

## ANNOUNCEMENT OF FEDERAL FUNDING OPPORTUNITY

### OVERVIEW INFORMATION

- **Federal Agency Name(s):** National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Department of Commerce
- **Funding Opportunity Title:** Proactive Species Conservation Program
- **Announcement Type:** Initial Announcement
- **Funding Opportunity Number:** NMFS-PRPO-2006-2000438
- **Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number(s):** 11.472, Unallied Science Programs
- **Dates:** Proposals must be received by 5 p.m. Eastern Time on March 1, 2006.
- **Application Submission:** Applications should be submitted online through the Grants.gov website at <http://grants.gov>. If online submission is not possible, electronic copies of applications may be emailed to [Lisa.Manning@noaa.gov](mailto:Lisa.Manning@noaa.gov) or mailed on compact disc to NOAA/NMFS/Office of Protected Resources, Attn: Lisa Manning or Marta Nammack, 1315 East-West Highway, SSMC3, Silver Spring, MD 20910.
- **Funding Opportunity Description:** The NMFS is initiating a program to support voluntary conservation efforts designed to conserve marine and anadromous species before they reach the point at which listing as threatened or endangered under the Endangered Species Act (ESA) becomes necessary. Such proactive conservation efforts can serve as an efficient, non-regulatory, and cost-effective means of managing potentially at-risk species. To raise awareness of potentially at-risk species and to foster their proactive conservation, the NMFS created a 'species of concern' list<sup>1</sup> in April 2004 (69 FR 19975). Under this solicitation, the NMFS is seeking to provide federal assistance, in the form of grants or cooperative agreements, to support the development and implementation of conservation plans for these federally-identified marine and anadromous species of concern. Any state, tribal, or local entity that has management or regulatory authority over activities that affect these species is eligible to apply to this grant program. This document describes how to submit proposals for funding in fiscal year (FY) 2006 and how the NMFS will determine which proposals will be funded.

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<sup>1</sup> 'Species of concern' are species that are potentially at risk of becoming threatened or endangered or may potentially require protections under the ESA, yet for which data are lacking. The species-of-concern status carries no procedural or regulatory protections under the ESA. The list of species of concern and descriptions of each species are available at <http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/species/concern/#list>.

## **FULL ANNOUNCEMENT TEXT**

### **A. Funding Opportunity Description**

#### **1. Program Objectives**

NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) is initiating a new grant program to support proactive conservation efforts for federally-identified species of concern (SOC). To raise awareness of potentially at-risk species and to foster proactive conservation, the NMFS created a 'species of concern' list in April 2004 (69 FR 19975). A list and description of these species is available at <http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/species/concern/#list>. The SOC status does not confer any protections under the Endangered Species Act (ESA). Under this solicitation, the NMFS is seeking to provide federal assistance, in the form of grants or cooperative agreements, to support the development and implementation of conservation plans for these marine and anadromous SOC. The Proactive Species Conservation Program (PSCP) is a pilot program that the NMFS intends to broaden if projects funded in FY06 can demonstrate success in conserving the target species and obviate the need to list them under the ESA.

When making listing determinations, the NMFS is required under section 4 of the ESA to consider any efforts being made to protect the species in question. The NMFS may also take into account any formalized conservation efforts that have yet to be implemented or to show effectiveness, *as long as there is certainty that the efforts will in fact be implemented and achieve their stated goals*. In order to provide consistency in how the NMFS makes such assessments, the NMFS developed a joint policy with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) that establishes criteria for determining when conservation efforts should contribute to making a listing under the ESA unnecessary. The policy, entitled "Policy for Evaluation of Conservation Efforts When Making Listing Decisions" (PECE), was finalized in March 2003 (68 FR 15100). The criteria established by PECE were also designed to guide the development and implementation of proactive conservation efforts. In order to effectively contribute to any future ESA listing determinations, conservation plans developed and implemented under a PSCP grant should be consistent with the criteria established by PECE.

Under section 4(a)(1) of the ESA, the NMFS must list a species if it is threatened or endangered because of any of the following five factors: (A) the present or threatened destruction, modification, or curtailment of its habitat or range; (B) overutilization for commercial, recreational, scientific, or educational purposes; (C) disease or predation; (D) the inadequacy of existing regulatory mechanisms; or (E) other natural manmade factors affecting its continued existence. In order to adequately measure the success of projects funded under the PSCP, the NMFS will initiate a status review for species targeted by the funded proposals. This status review will take into account whether the species is threatened or endangered because of any of the five factors listed above. Approximately five years later, when funded PSCP projects are completed, the NMFS will again conduct a status review to evaluate the impact of the funded projects on the status of the species. Any efforts implemented under a PSCP grant that protect

the species or reduce threats identified in the first status review will be considered during the second status review.

## **2. Program Priorities**

Proposals submitted to the PSCP should address the development and implementation of conservation plans for species on the NMFS' SOC list. Successful applications will be those that demonstrate a high probability of contributing to the conservation of the species and meeting the criteria established by PECE. In particular, applications should demonstrate how they will meet criteria A.1-9 (see 68 FR 15114), which are used to evaluate the certainty that conservation efforts will be implemented, and criteria B.1-6 (see 69 FR 15115), which are used to evaluate the certainty that the conservation efforts will be successful.

Conservation plans developed under a funded PSCP grant should include conservation efforts that address or mitigate existing threats to the species throughout all or a significant part of its range, or within a particularly vulnerable or ecologically important area of its range. Priority will be given to proposals that address threats or conservation needs across a major portion of a species' range. Therefore, multi-jurisdictional or multi-state projects are strongly encouraged. Proposals that address a smaller area within the species' range will also be considered for funding.

Proposals may address one or more SOC. Priority will be given to applicants with a demonstrated track record of successful implementation of conservation activities or programs.

See 'Program Objectives' (above) for more information on the type of proposals solicited under this announcement.

## **3. Program Authority 16 USC 661**

### **B. Award Information**

#### **1. Funding Availability**

This solicitation announces that up to approximately \$2.0 million may be available for distribution under the FY 2006 PSCP, in award amounts of a minimum of \$400 thousand to a maximum of \$1.0 million each. Exact funding amounts will be determined based on proposals and available funds.

Applicants are hereby given notice that funds have not yet been appropriated for this program. There is no guarantee that sufficient funds will be available to make awards for all qualified projects. Publication of this notice does not oblige NMFS to award any specific project or to obligate any available funds; and, if an application is selected for funding, NMFS has no obligation to provide any additional funding in connection with that award in subsequent years.

Notwithstanding verbal or written assurance that may have been received, pre-award costs are not allowed under the award unless approved by the Grant Officer.

## **2. Project/Award Period**

This solicitation announces that a maximum of approximately \$2.0 million may be available for distribution under the FY 2006 PSCP, in award amounts of \$400 thousand to \$1.0 million per fiscal year. Awards will be made as 5-year awards. Thus, over the full project period, the total award will be up to \$5.0 million. Applications must include project plans and budgets for each year of the project. Projects will be funded for no more than one year at a time. Funding for subsequent years will be at the sole discretion of the Department of Commerce and will depend on satisfactory performance by the recipient, the availability of funds to support the continuation of the project, and NMFS priorities. Project proposals accepted for funding will not compete for funding in subsequent budget periods within the approved award period. If an applicant wishes to continue work on a project funded through this program beyond the project period and obligated award funds have not been expended by the end of this period, the applicant can notify the assigned Federal Program Officer 30 days prior to the end of the period to determine eligibility for a no-cost extension.

## **3. Type of funding instrument**

Under this solicitation, NMFS will fund grants or cooperative agreements as multi-year awards with project periods of 5 years. For cooperative agreements, NMFS may assist in the development of conservation plans, provide review and comment on conservation plans, and make other recommendations as appropriate.

## **4. Permits and Approvals**

It is the applicant's responsibility to obtain all necessary federal, state, and local permits and approvals where necessary for the proposed work. If proposed activities will take place within National Marine Sanctuaries, National Parks, National Seashores, and other federally designated protected areas, it is the applicant's responsibility to request and obtain from the appropriate government agencies any necessary permits or letters of agreement prior to award. Documentation of requests or approvals of relevant permits must be included in the proposal package.

Applicants are expected to design their proposals so that they minimize potential adverse impacts on the environment. Applications will be reviewed to ensure that they have sufficient environmental documentation to allow program staff to determine whether the proposal is categorically excluded from further analysis or whether an Environmental Assessment is necessary in conformance with requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). For those applications needing an Environmental Assessment, affected applicants will be informed after the merit review stage and will be asked to provide information necessary to complete a draft of the assessment (prior to award).

Failure to obtain required federal, state, and local permits, approvals, letters of agreement, or failure to provide information needed to complete environmental analyses where necessary (i.e., NEPA environmental assessments or documentation) may delay the award of funds if a project is otherwise selected for funding.

## **C. Eligibility Information**

### **1. Eligible Applicants**

Eligible applicants are state, tribal, or local governments that have regulatory or management authority over activities that affect one or more SOC identified by the NMFS. A current list of the NMFS' SOC can be found at <http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/species/concern/#list> or obtained from the Office of Protected Resources (see section G, Agency Contacts).

Applicants are not eligible to submit a proposal under this program if they are a federal employee; however, federal employees may serve as Cooperators. In addition, NMFS employees are not allowed to actively engage in the preparation of proposals or write letters of support for any application. However, if applicable, NMFS employees can write a letter verifying that they are collaborating with a particular project. NMFS contacts (see section G) are available to provide information regarding programmatic goals and objectives associated with the PSCP, other ongoing ESA programs, regional funding priorities, and, along with other Federal Program Officers, can provide information on application procedures and completion of required forms.

### **2. Cost Sharing or Matching Requirement**

There are no cost-sharing or matching requirements under this solicitation.

## **D. Application and Submission Information**

### **1. Address to Request Application Package**

The federal funding announcement and application instructions for this grant program are available via the Grants.gov website at <http://www.grants.gov>. Applicants without internet access can obtain application packages from Lisa Manning, NOAA/NMFS/Office of Protected Resources, 1315 East-West Highway, Silver Spring MD 20912; 301-713-1401; [Lisa.Manning@noaa.gov](mailto:Lisa.Manning@noaa.gov).

### **2. Content and Form of Application Submission**

The instructions below are designed to help applicants in preparing and submitting their application. All required federal forms, the narrative description of the budget and proposed project, and applicable supporting documentation must be complete and must follow the format described here.

Federal forms should be downloaded from Grants.gov; if forms cannot be downloaded, they can also be obtained by contacting Lisa Manning, NOAA/NMFS/Office of Protected Resources, 1315 East-West Highway, Silver Spring, MD 20910 ([Lisa.Manning@noaa.gov](mailto:Lisa.Manning@noaa.gov), 301-713-1401). Assistance in filling out required forms and avoiding common problems can be

found on the NOAA Grants web site at: <http://www.rdc.noaa.gov/~grants/>. The required forms for all proposals are as follows:

Application for Federal Assistance: **SF-424**

Certifications Regarding Debarment, Suspension, and other Responsibility Matters: Drug

Free Workplace Environment: **CD-511**

Budget Information, Non-Construction Programs: **SF-424A**

Assurances, Non-Construction Programs: **SF-424B**

To complete item 10 of Standard Form 424, the “Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance” number is 11.472 and the title is “Unallied Science Program”. For item 13 of Standard Form 424, a start date no earlier than August 1, 2006 should be selected.

For projects with 50 percent or more of their federal requested amount supporting construction activities, the following forms are required in place of the SF-424A and SF-424B:

Budget Information, Construction Programs: **SF-424C**

Assurances, Construction Programs: **SF-424D**

Depending on the applicant, the following form may also be required:

Disclosure of Lobbying Activities: **SF-LLL**

We are not required to screen applications before the submission deadline, nor do we have to give applicants an opportunity to correct any deficiencies leading to rejection. However, we strongly recommend early submission of applications in the event that we have the resources to pre-screen. Note that there will be no extensions of the deadline for application revisions and that any revised applications must be re-submitted by the original solicitation deadline.

The Project Description may not exceed 10 pages, double-spaced, with text no smaller than 10-point font. Tables and visual materials, including charts, graphs, maps, photographs, and other pictorial presentations associated with the Project Description are not included in the 10-page limitation. Appendices may be included but must not exceed a total of 15-pages in length. Appendices may include CVs, resumes, permit documentation, indirect cost rate agreements, list of cited references, letters of endorsement, and any other relevant materials.

Proposals must include the following information:

a. Title Page: A Title Page must be included for each project. The Title Page must list the project title, project duration (with a start date no earlier than August 1, 2006), applicant name, name of Project Manager or Contact, address and phone number of the Project Manager or Contact, the project’s objective(s), and a statement regarding the federal, any non-federal, and total costs of the project.

b. Project Summary (1-page limit): Provide a brief summary of the project goals and objectives, the proposed activities, the geographic area where the project would occur, and expected outcomes and benefits of the proposed activities. This summary may be posted on our website if the project is funded.

c. Project Description (10-page limit): Provide a complete and accurate description of the work to be undertaken. This section should provide specific objectives, performance measures, and the expected significance of the proposed work; information that demonstrates the

need for the project; descriptions of methodologies and time-lines for all phases of work; and, if applicable, the relationship to other ongoing work, or work planned, anticipated, or underway using federal assistance. Proposals should outline three phases of work: development of the conservation plan, approval of the conservation plan by the appropriate management authority, and implementation of the conservation plan. Both the plan development and implementation phases should include monitoring and adaptive management components. The Project Description should thus consist of the following information:

(1) Project goals and objectives: Identify the problem/opportunity the project intends to address and describe its significance to the conservation of the species. Identify the project objectives, which should be as specific and quantitative as possible and attainable with the time, money, and human resources available.

(2) Project narrative: The project narrative is the technical plan of activities that are to be accomplished during each budget period of the project. This narrative should include detailed descriptions of each of three phases of work: development of the conservation plan, approval of the plan, and implementation of the plan. The narrative should include detailed descriptions of activities, methods, collaborators and milestones. The narrative should also respond to the following questions:

(a) What specific activities does the project include and how do these activities relate to the project's goals and objectives?

(b) Who will be responsible for carrying out each activity and what are their authorities? Describe how the project will be organized and managed. The lead organization/individual and person listed as the technical contact should be identified as the Project Manager (PM). Indicate what specific management authorities the PM has over the species addressed in the proposal. One PM must be designated on each project, but the PM may or may not be the applicant. However, if the applicant is not the PM, there must be an explanation of the relationship between the applicant and PM (e.g., applicant will be responsible for managing the grant funds and the PM will be responsible for completing the project milestones on time and within budget, etc.). Highlight activities that will be conducted by sub-contractors, volunteers, and others designated as Cooperators. Project participants or organizations that will have a significant role in conducting the project should be listed as Cooperators. Organizations or individuals that support the project, for example researchers contributing data or materials, should be referred to as Cooperators. A copy of the PM's and all Cooperators' current resume or CV must be included in an appendix. Use of volunteer staff time to complete project activities and oversight of those volunteers should be discussed, if applicable. The PM is responsible for all technical oversight and implementation of the approved work plan as delineated in the project narrative.

(c) What are the project milestones? List milestones and describe specific activities and associated time lines necessary to meet them. Describe the time lines in increments (e.g., month 1, month 2, etc.), rather than by specific dates.

(3) Benefits or results expected: Identify the benefits to the species and the expected products resulting from a successfully completed project. Describe expected outcomes, results, or products and how they will be applied and/or made available to appropriate user groups. Discuss what performance measures will be used to evaluate the success of the project.

(4) Need for Government financial assistance: Demonstrate the need for government financial assistance. List all other sources of funding that are or have been sought for the project.

(5) Federal, state and local government activities: List any programs (federal, state, or local government activities) this project would affect and describe the relationship between the project and those plans or activities.

d. Total project costs and budget narrative: Total project costs are the amount of funds required to accomplish what is proposed in the Project Description and include contributions and donations. Each application must include clear and concise budget information, both on the required federal forms and in the narrative detail of this section.

The budget narrative should itemize costs per category, provide direct and indirect cost totals, and present a justification for the requested budget.

Applications must use OMB standard form 424A, "Budget Information - Non Construction Programs" or standard form 424C, "Budget Information, Construction Programs" and associated form instructions. All instructions should be read before completing the appropriate form. Federal columns on these forms must be filled in completely, and the amounts per category and total amounts must correspond with the budget narrative.

If indirect costs are requested in the budget, the application must include a copy of the current, approved, negotiated indirect cost agreement with the Federal Government. For more information on indirect costs see section D.4.a.

e. Appendix (15-page limit): Additional material that is necessary or useful to the description of the project may be provided. These materials are not included in the 10-page limit for the Project Description. Curricula vitae or resumes of the Project Manager and Cooperator(s) must be included here. Applicants requiring ESA scientific or other permits must include evidence of such a permit (e.g. by providing the permit number) or evidence they have submitted any necessary permit applications. Appendices may also include letters of endorsement, indirect cost rate agreements, and any other relevant material. Tables and visual materials, including charts, graphs, maps, photographs, and any other pictorial presentations will not be counted in the 15-page limitation.

### **3. Submission Dates and Times**

Proposals must be received by 5 p.m. Eastern Time on March 1, 2006. Proposals received after that time will not be considered for funding. Applications submitted on-line through Grants.gov will be automatically date and time stamped upon submission. Other application submissions will be date and time stamped by hand once they are received.

### **4. Funding Restrictions**

#### **a. Indirect Cost Rates**

The budget may include an amount for indirect costs if the applicant has an established indirect cost rate with the Federal Government. A copy of the current, approved negotiated indirect cost agreement with the Federal Government must be included in the application. If the applicant does not have a current negotiated rate and plans to seek reimbursement for indirect costs, documentation necessary to establish a rate must be submitted within 90 days of receiving an award.



b. Allowable Costs

Funds awarded cannot necessarily pay for all the costs that the recipient might incur in the course of carrying out the project. Allowable costs are determined by reference to the Office of Management and Budget Circular A-87, "Cost Principles for State, Local and Indian Tribal Governments."

**5. Other Submission Requirements**

Electronic application submissions should be transmitted on-line through <http://www.grants.gov>. For applicants without internet access, electronic copies of applications can be emailed to [Lisa.Manning@noaa.gov](mailto:Lisa.Manning@noaa.gov) or mailed on compact disc to NOAA/NMFS/Office of Protected Resources, Attn: Lisa Manning or Marta Nammack, 1315 East-West Highway, SSMC3, Silver Spring, MD 20910. Word and Excel documents or PDF files are acceptable for electronic submissions. If it is necessary for you to submit a paper application, then you must submit one signed original and two signed copies (including supporting information) to NOAA/NMFS/Office of Protected Resources, Attn: Lisa Manning or Marta Nammack, 1315 East-West Highway, SSMC3, Silver Spring, MD 20910. Paper applications should not be bound in any manner. Emailed and mailed applications must be received by the same deadline as those transmitted on-line through Grants.gov.

**E. Application Review Information**

**1. Evaluation Criteria:** The proposals will be evaluated based on the following criteria (with their relative weights):

a. Importance/Relevance and Applicability of Proposal to the Program Goals (35%)

This criterion addresses whether there is intrinsic value in the proposed work and/or relevance to NOAA, Federal, regional, State, or local activities. Applications will be evaluated on the applicability of the project goals and objectives to conservation of SOC. Reviewers will consider: the contribution of potential outcomes, results, or products to SOC conservation and management, whether milestones and products are clearly identified, whether appropriate performance measures were included, and whether criteria of PECE were addressed. (Score: 1-5 points, where 1= not important/relevant; 2= minimally important/relevant; 3=moderately important/ relevant; 4= very important/ relevant; 5= extremely important/ relevant.)

b. Technical/ Scientific Merit (30%)

This criterion addresses whether the approach is technically sound and/or innovative, if the methods are appropriate, and whether there are clear project goals and objectives. Applications will also be evaluated on whether the approach is likely to result in successful execution of the project, and if the anticipated results can be achieved in the time frame specified. Reviewers will consider whether sufficient information is provided to evaluate the design of the project relative to the stated goals/ objectives. (Score: 1-5 points, where 1= unsound; 2= minimally sound; 3= moderately sound; 4= very sound; 5= extremely sound.)

c. Overall Qualification of Applicants (10%)

This criterion addresses whether the applicant(s) possesses the necessary education, experience, or training, as well as the facilities and administrative resources to accomplish the

project. This criterion also addresses whether the applicant, PM, and all Cooperators have the appropriate management authority to implement actions identified in the proposal. Reviewers will consider: previous related experience and qualifications of the Project Manager, Cooperator(s) and other personnel, including designated contractors and consultants. (Score: 1-5 points, where 1= unqualified; 2 = minimally qualified; 3= moderately qualified; 4= very qualified; 5= extremely qualified.)

d. Project Costs (15%)

This criterion addresses whether the budget is sufficiently detailed, realistic and commensurate with the project needs and time-frame. The proposed costs and overall budget of the project will be evaluated in terms of the work proposed. The itemized costs and the overall budget must be justified and allocated appropriately. (Score: 1-5 points, where 1= no detail/unrealistic; 2= minimally detailed/ realistic; 3= moderately detailed/ realistic; 4= very detailed/ realistic; 5= extremely detailed/ realistic.)

e. Outreach and Education (10%)

This criterion addresses whether the project provides a focused and effective education and/or outreach strategy regarding NOAA's mission to protect the Nation's natural resources. Reviewers will consider whether project results will be shared appropriately and whether sufficient detail is provided to make this determination. (Score: 1-5 points, where 1= insufficient/ ineffective outreach; 2= minimally effective outreach; 3= moderately effective outreach; 4= very effective outreach; 5= extremely effectively outreach).

## **2. Review and Selection Process**

Screening, review, and selection procedures will take place in 3 steps, described in detail in this section: initial evaluation, merit review, and final selection by the Selecting Official (i.e., Director, Office of Protected Resources). The Selecting Official will make the final decision regarding which applications will be funded based upon the numerical ranking of the applications and the evaluations by the merit reviewers as well as the selection factors set in section E.3. below.

a. Initial Evaluation of the Applications

The initial screening will ensure that application packages have all required forms and application elements, clearly relate to the 2006 PSCP, and meet all of the eligibility criteria.

b. Merit Review

Applications meeting the requirements of this solicitation will undergo merit review. This merit review will be conducted by a minimum of three reviewers per application. Each reviewer will individually evaluate and score proposals using the evaluation criteria provided in section E.1. above. This review may involve experts from both NOAA and non-NOAA organizations. The reviewers' ratings will be used to produce a rank order of the proposals. No consensus advice will be given by the reviewers.

c. Final Selection

After applications have undergone merit review, NMFS Protected Resources staff will summarize the merit reviews by averaging the scores and prepare recommendations for funding to the Selecting Official (i.e. Director, Office of Protected Resources).

### **3. Selection Factors**

The merit review ratings shall provide a rank order to the Selecting Official for final recommendation to the NOAA Grants Officer. The Selecting Official shall award in the rank order of the review ratings unless the proposal is justified to be selected out of rank order based upon the following factors, where applicable:

- a. Availability of funding
- b. Balance/distribution of funds
  - i. Geographically
  - ii. By type of institutions
  - iii. By type of partners
  - iv. By research areas
  - v. By project types
- c. Whether this project duplicates other projects funded or considered for funding by NOAA or other federal agencies
- d. Program priorities and policy factors as set out in section A.1-2.
- e. Applicant's prior award performance
- f. Partnerships with and/or Participation of targeted groups
- g. Adequacy of information necessary for NOAA staff to make a NEPA determination and draft necessary documentation before recommendations for funding are made to the Grants Officer

### **4. Anticipated Announcement and Award Dates**

Subject to the availability of funds, review of proposals will occur during the two months following the deadline given in this announcement for proposal submissions. Funding should begin during summer 2006 for most approved projects. Projects should not be expected to begin prior to August 1, 2006, unless otherwise directed by the Program Officer.

## **F. Award Administration Information**

### **1. Award Notices**

Successful applicants will receive notification that the application has been recommended for funding to the NOAA Grants Management Division. This notification is not an authorization to begin performance of the project. Official notification of funding, signed by a NOAA Grants Officer, is the authorizing document that allows the project to begin. Notifications will be issued through electronic or regular mail to the Authorizing Official and the Project Manager. Unsuccessful applicants will be notified that their proposal was not selected for recommendation. Unsuccessful applications will be kept on file in the Program Office for a period of at least 12 months, and then destroyed.

### **2. Administrative and National Policy Requirements**

a. Department of Commerce Pre-award Notification Requirements

Administrative and national policy requirements for all Department of Commerce awards are contained in the Department of Commerce Pre-Award Notification Requirements for Grants and Cooperative Agreements published in the Federal Register on December 30, 2004 (69 FR 78389). You may obtain a copy of this notice by contacting the agency contacts under section G, or by going to the website at: <http://www.gpoaccess.gov/fr/index.html>.

b. Limitation of Liability

In no event will NOAA or the Department of Commerce be responsible for proposal preparation costs if these programs fail to receive funding or are cancelled because of other agency priorities. Publication of this announcement does not oblige NOAA to award any specific project or to obligate any available funds.

c. National Environmental Policy Act

NOAA must analyze the potential environmental impacts, as required by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), for applicant projects or proposals which are seeking NOAA federal funding opportunities. Detailed information on NOAA compliance with NEPA can be found at the following NOAA NEPA website: <http://www.nepa.noaa.gov/>, including our NOAA Administrative Order 216-6 for NEPA, <http://www.nepa.noaa.gov/NAO216--6--TOC.pdf>, and the Council on Environmental Quality implementation regulations, [http://ceq.eh.doe.gov/nepa/regs/ceq/toc\\_ceq.htm](http://ceq.eh.doe.gov/nepa/regs/ceq/toc_ceq.htm). Consequently, as part of an applicant's package, and under their description of their program activities, applicants are required to provide detailed information on the activities to be conducted, locations, sites, species and habitat to be affected, possible construction activities, and any environmental concerns that may exist (e.g., the use and disposal of hazardous or toxic chemicals, introduction of non-indigenous species, impacts to endangered and threatened species, aquaculture projects, and impacts to coral reef systems). In addition to providing specific information that will serve as the basis for any required impact analyses, applicants may also be requested to assist NOAA in drafting of an environmental assessment, if NOAA determines an assessment is required. Applicants will also be required to cooperate with NOAA in identifying feasible measures to reduce or avoid any identified adverse environmental impacts of their proposal. The failure to do so shall be grounds for not selecting an application. In some cases if additional information is required after an application is selected, funds can be withheld by the Grants Officer under a special award condition requiring the recipient to submit additional environmental compliance information sufficient to enable NOAA to make an assessment on any impacts that a project may have on the environment.

### **3. Reporting**

Grant recipients will be required to submit financial and performance (technical) reports. All financial reports shall be submitted to NOAA's Grants Management Division in accordance with the award conditions. Performance reports should be submitted to the NOAA Program Officer (Lisa Manning, Office of Protected Resources). Electronic submission of performance reports is preferred. All reports will be submitted on a semi-annual schedule and must be submitted no later than 30 days following the end of each 6-month period from the start date of the award. The comprehensive final report is due 90 days after the award expiration.

## **G. Agency Contacts**

If you have any questions regarding this proposal solicitation, please contact Lisa Manning or Marta Nammack at the NOAA/NMFS/Office of Protected Resources, Endangered Species Division, 1315 East-West Highway, Silver Spring, MD 20910, by phone at 301-713-1401, or by email at [Lisa.Manning@noaa.gov](mailto:Lisa.Manning@noaa.gov) and [Marta.Nammack@noaa.gov](mailto:Marta.Nammack@noaa.gov). You may also contact one of the following people in your region for further guidance: Kim Damon-Randall, Northeast Regional Office ([kimberly.damon-randall@noaa.gov](mailto:kimberly.damon-randall@noaa.gov), 978-281-9300 x 6535), Jennifer Moore, Southeast Regional Office ([Jennifer.moore@noaa.gov](mailto:Jennifer.moore@noaa.gov), 727-824-5312), Chris Yates, Pacific Islands Regional Office ([Chris.Yates@noaa.gov](mailto:Chris.Yates@noaa.gov), 808-944-2235), Melissa Neuman, Southwest Regional Office ([Melissa.neuman@noaa.gov](mailto:Melissa.neuman@noaa.gov), 562-980-4115), Scott Rumsey, Northwest Regional Office ([scott.rumsey@noaa.gov](mailto:scott.rumsey@noaa.gov), 503-872-2791), Kaja Brix, Alaska Regional Office ([kaja.brix@noaa.gov](mailto:kaja.brix@noaa.gov), 907-586-7824).